

How to Determine the Press Run Month and Year Of a Gregg Publishing Company Book From a Printers Code (Revised 12-18-11)

From 1914 through early 1942, the Gregg Publishing Company used a printers code on the verso (reverse side) of a Gregg book title page. In a few instances, the printers code appeared at the end of a Gregg book. If you know how to read the printers code, in most cases, you will be able to determine the month and year of the press run for your copy of a Gregg book. These codes indicated the print month and year, NOT the date that the book was first published. Many Gregg Shorthand books with identical text and Shorthand plates have many different print runs with different printers codes.

Example

Here is an example of the printers code for the 1931 Anniversary "Alice in Wonderland" in Gregg Shorthand that has the printers code "E-78-NP-5":

- The first part (E) is the print run month (May). Months are indicated by a capital letter A through L (A=Jan thru L=Dec).
- The second part (78) is a code for the print run year (1931).
- The third part (NP) is the initials of the printing company (National Process).
- The fourth part (5) is a code for the number of books (5,000) printed in the press run.

Notes

- Many Gregg printers codes in books printed before 1920 only have the first two parts of the printers code, which are run together and are missing Parts 3 and 4 (e.g. H84 for August 1918).
- A few Gregg books used an incorrect printers code year segment. For example, the April 1919 first edition of "Alice in Wonderland" in Gregg Shorthand has the printers code D83 for April 1915. The printers code for this book should have been D82 for April 1919. The first printing of "Alice in Wonderland" in Gregg Shorthand was in April 1919.¹ The year code 83 was used for all Gregg books printed in 1915, as well as for the original "Alice in Wonderland" from 1919.
- For a few books, Gregg used the same printers code year after year for multiple press runs. The 1919 "Alice in Wonderland" in Gregg Shorthand is an example of this. The same printers code (D83) was used in all press runs from 1919 to May 1926, when a new printers code (E-59) was used.
- Some Gregg books display a Gregg Writer Magazine cover photo ad with an issue date. This picture appears in the ad section in the back of a Gregg book. The date on the Gregg Writer Magazine ad photo does NOT always indicate the print year of the Gregg book. There are some Gregg books with a Gregg Writer Magazine cover photo ad dated 2 years prior to the actual print year of the book.

¹ There is a mountain of evidence to support that this book was first published in 1919, including the title page listing of the Gregg Publishing Company's Boston Office, which did not open until Spring 1919.

List of Printers Codes for Print Month – First Segment

As mentioned earlier, the first segment of the printers code indicated the month of the press run for a copy of a Gregg book. Here is a guide to the month segment of the printers code:

Month Code	Print Month
A	January
B	February
C	March
D	April
E	May
F	June
G	July
H	August
I	September
J	October
K	November
L	December

List of Printers Codes For Print Year – Second Segment

As mentioned earlier, the second segment of the printers code indicated the year of the press run for a copy of a Gregg book. Here is a guide to the year segment of the printers code:

- 1888 through 1913 - No printers code used. Sometimes the print year is on the title page.
- 1914 thru early 1942 - The following codes were used for the print year (2nd) segment of the printers code:

Year Code	Print Year
86	1914
83	1915
89	1916
81	1917
84	1918
82	1919
5a	1920
58	1921
55	1922
57	1923
56	1924
53	1925
59	1926
51	1927
54	1928
52	1929
7a	1930
78	1931
75	1932
77	1933
76	1934
73	1935
79	1936
71	1937
74	1938
72	1939
6a	1940
68	1941
65	1942

- The printers code 65 was only used for January and possibly February 1942.²
- From March 1942 through 1949 (when McGraw Hill bought the Gregg Publishing Company), the actual Month and Year were used for the first two parts of the printers code (e.g. June-1942).

² A copy of *Gregg Shorthand: Manual For The Functional Method, Part 2*, was discovered with the printers code A-65 for January 1942. Copies of the Anniversary editions of *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Great Stone Face* were found with printers codes that started with March-1942. To determine the exact date when printers codes with actual years replaced those with year number codes will require further investigation. It is safe to say that by March 1942, the actual years were included in printers codes for Gregg Publishing Company books.